

Vidor, TX 2/21/74

Bridge City 8/16/81

Vidor, TX 3/6/83

Anahae TX 6/24/90 2/22/98 9/1/01 KSHN 8/4/02

Prepare Thy Heart

PREPARE THY HEART --Ezra 7:10

Introduction:

1. Preparation is necessary for success. Cf. Football team, (practice sessions); child in school, etc.
2. Would be foolish for the farmer to plant his seed upon unplowed ground --Cf. Luke 8:5
3. It is not an accident when people succeed.

I. ONE MUST PREPARE THEIR HEART TO PLEASE JEHOVAH:

1. How strange it is that people understand this in every area, except religion. Far too many feel no need to prepare the heart to serve God.
2. Heart--Intellect, mind, our attitude must be prepared--effort expended. PREPARATION.
3. This is why many do not enjoy the worship--they make no preparation, hit and miss affair.
4. Exra 7:10--Exra had prepared his heart....
5. Mt 6:33--Seek ye first kingdom of God--
ALL ELSE MUST BE SECONDARY, MUST HAVE A SINCERE DESIRE TO PLEASE GOD.
6. Why is it that God's Word means so LITTLE to some people?? They have no desire for it!!!

II. PREPARATION---WHAT NEXT???

1. May one stop after they make up their mind to make the heart prepared?? OBVIOUS THAT WE MUST PREPARE THE HEART TO DO SOMETHING:
 2. Exra 7:10--"TO SEEK THE LAW OF THE LORD."
 3. "Seek"--desire, effort, longing, actively searching
 4. Ps. 1:2--Delight is in the law of the Lord.....etc
Ps 119:16,24,47,72,97,103,104,
How does my attitude toward God's Word compare with the Psalmist's??
 5. Our seeking God MUST BEGIN WITH GOD'S LAW.
 6. But there is something else: THERE IS EFFORT.
It takes work to learn God's Will.
MEDITATING DAY AND NIGHT. UPON GOD'S WORD.
 7. 2 Tim 2:15--Study to show thyself approved.....
No room for laziness, takes diligent effort.
Heb 11:6--of them that DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.
No half-heart effort here.
 8. SEEK WHAT?? THE LAW OF THE LORD.
We put much effort into many things: Do we study newspapers, magazines, trash, etc. while ignoring God's Word? How much time do YOU spend in THE BIBLE???
- Some can name each player on NFL teams, but couldn't tell you the apostles names.
From tee to green--but not plan of salvation

- Every bush on the lake--organization of church soap-box operas--qualities of godly woman.
9. Psalmist delighted in God's statutes. SWEET.

III. Ezra 7:10--TO DO IT.

1. A PREPARED HEART; SEEK THE WORD OF GOD: THEN....
2. ONE MUST DO GOD'S WORD.
3. Jas 1:22-25; Matt 7:24,26
4. Not enough to hear a lesson on evangelism--DO IT
Must do more than hear about giving--must do it.
Must do more than hear about study--must do it.
Visiting the sick--MUST DO IT.
Worshipping regularly--MUST DO IT.
5. Oh, so many hear, but do not practice
6. Ezekiel had that problem--Ezek 33:31-32.
BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD--NOT HEARERS ONLY.

IV. Ezra 7:10--TEACH THE WORD.

1. Heart prepared, seeking Word, Doing it, yet more.
2. We are to be TEACHERS OF THE WORD.
3. Sharing our knowledge with others.
4. If you rejoice in the Lord--tell others about it
Do you hope in the gospel--share the good news.
See others in spiritual danger--warn with Word.
5. Ps 119:13, 46--
6. Acts 8:4--As Saul persecuted--scattered, preaching
Would we teach the word if we were persecuted?
Shall our peaceful existence excuse us??

CONCLUSION:

1. Ezra 7:10--the way to successful service to God
 - (1) Prepare the heart
 - (2) Seek God's Will
 - (3) Do It
 - (4) Teach it.
2. ARE WE SERVING GOD SUCCESSFULLY?
How about your heart??? Your attitude???
Are you honestly seeking God's will.
Have you obeyed primary commandments???
As a child of God, are you teaching???